

THE TIME OF THE SINGING OF THE BIRDS.

There is only one subject which has, for me, as great a charm as birds, and that is boys and girls. You are all familiar with the story of the magic ring with which a certain knight gave to a Princess the power to hear and understand the language of the birds. She had to get up very early in the morning, and so have we if we would become familiar with their ways and speech. No time could be better for photographic work or study of bird life than an early May morning, say between five and eight o'clock, for it is then that our bird friends do the greater part of their feeding, working, and "toilette."

The male *chiff-chaff* takes no interest whatever in his offspring until they are grown up, and during the first two or three weeks of their existence he hardly goes near the nest. The father, however, takes a keen interest in their higher education, and gives them their first lessons in flying. The nest is lined with feathers. The *chiff-chaff*, though so well known in many parts of England and Ireland, is scarcely seen in Scotland.

Let me describe to you how I watched a family of these little birds taking a sun bath. They spread their wings and tails right out, threw back their heads, opened their mouths, and seemed literally to drink in the sunshine. I have watched the birds in my own aviary do the same thing, and even owls will enjoy the sun bath in a similar way. It is supposed to be a cure for a sore throat; once I tried it myself, but the only result achieved was a bad headache!

It is curious how birds frequent the same spots time after time. I know a certain willow-wren which can invariably be seen in the lane near my house, on No. 19 telephone post. It is interesting to look out for birds in this way, besides helping us to study their ways and habitat.

The *willow-wren* is a little more yellow than the *chiff-chaff*, and its legs are pinkish, while those of the *chiff-chaff* are brown. The willow-wren builds a dome-shaped nest on the ground, and, unlike its neighbour, is a diligent father in attending to the babies' needs. Its song is plaintive, but very sweet in tone. These little birds seem to have a strong antipathy to ants, for I watched them one day picking up the ants which were near the nest, halving them, and throwing them away.

Here we saw a charming picture of baby willow-wrens, whose nurse had evidently neglected to do their hair, but in the following slide we saw them elegantly "coiffés."

The *white-throat* is a very happy bird, and though not the most musical of our feathered friends, would be greatly missed. The nest is a very fragile concern, and is often built in a wild rose bush or bramble. They are most methodical birds in their habits; the cock feeds the chicks from one side of the nest, and the hen from the other, working the whole day, but for about one hour's rest at noon.

The *lesser white-throat* is not easily distinguished from the former. Its call note, which somewhat resembles that of the *chaffinch*, betrays its presence in the hedgerows. This bird is practically unknown in Ireland. It is a wonderful acrobat, assuming the unusual position of standing tip-toe. The time spent by young birds in the nest varies from five, eight, or ten days to three weeks; in this case it is only a matter of a few days.

The *black-cap* is second to none as a singer; indeed, it is as if the very soul of the wild rose had found expression in song. The female's cap is dark brown, but the male's is jet black. It is amusing to see the careful selection made by the hen when building the nest. For the outside she accepts any rough pieces her mate may bring, but when the inside is to be arranged, she refuses his offer of rough twigs and selects only those which meet with her approval.

The song of the *garden-warbler* resembles that of the

black-cap, but they are not often to be found in the same locality. Their nests are similar in structure though the eggs vary in colour. The garden-warbler often chooses a gooseberry or currant bush in which to build his nest.

The way in which the *woodland warblers* feed their young is most amusing. In a nest of six young hungry birds they are arranged in two rows and are fed in order from right to left on the bottom row. One might think that the top row tenants never succeeded in obtaining any of the dainties brought by the devoted parents, but such is not the case, for as soon as the bottom row is fed, those on the top jostle their brothers until they are forced to vacate the privileged position, and in this way the top row becomes the bottom row!

The *sedge-warbler* is a slim little bird who slips very daintily through the reeds in which he makes his home.

The nest of the *reed-warbler* is usually constructed hanging between five reeds. It is of necessity a very deep nest, otherwise the wind would cause the eggs to fall out as it sways.

It is often asked: "Why do birds sing?" We are apt to think that because of our superior nature, they do it to please us; but the real answer is: "They sing because they *must*." The reed-warbler will, on the slightest provocation, send forth a whole volume of song.

The *grasshopper warbler* is very common on the Norfolk marshes. It is one of the first birds to sing in the morning. It continues to pour forth its merry lay the whole day long, and may often be heard singing in the night. Its nest is built on the ground, but is difficult to find owing to the fact that the bird runs along the ground and flies up or alights at a considerable distance from its nest. It is, however, one of the easiest birds to photograph. Miss Turner told us how she took one noisy little "disturber of the peace" from the nest and put it in her pocket. When the mother returned to the nest she called out in so alarming a tone of voice that she was not content until she had investigated round the camera and found her lost babe in the pocket of Miss Turner's coat!

This is one of the many birds who like to be talked to; and while this nest of lively little birds were being photographed, their attention was kept by the soothing power of the photographer's voice.

We ought never to take the eggs of the *hedge-sparrow*, because it is the most useful of birds to mankind. Its eggs are a lovely sky blue in colour, and are familiar to us all.

Miss Turner ended her most charming lecture by telling us of her experience with a family of *swans* on the Norfolk Broads. At first, the parents were most antagonistic, but by degrees the male swan was tamed through his love of bread. During the nesting time he left his mate severely alone with the exception of taking her place on the nest during one hour each day. In the due course of events, six baby swans came into being, and were one day brought to call on the occupant of the house-boat. It was one of the most pleasing sights possible, Miss Turner told us, to watch the domestic life of this family of swans, from the cosy rides on the father's back, to the tucking up of all six in the nest for the night.

F. W. YOUNG.

"SCALE HOW" EVENING AT THE WINCHESTER CHILDREN'S GATHERING.

Not the least of the pleasures at the Children's Gathering was Miss Chaplin's paper on Jane Austen, which the children in Classes III. and IV. were allowed to come and hear.

Having read some of her books and Miss Mason's paper in the *Parents' Review* during the term, they were ready and wanting to know more about her. The few known facts of her life were soon told, and the delightful letters, chiefly to her elder sister, Cassandra, dwelling on domestic life, with small homely details or on her views about marriage, sounding very quaint to us now, were read by Dr. Helen Webb, Miss Mellis Smith, and various students and friends.

One peculiarity in the letters was the absence of any political news, although she was living in such stirring times. She knew that the details of home life would be more welcome to her sister, who, no doubt, would read the news to her father every morning in the daily papers.

Jane Austen's love of children was characteristic, for she was adored by her nephews and nieces. An amusing passage was read from "Pride and Prejudice" on the manners of some spoilt children at Barton Park.

Jane was not only clever with her hands, *e.g.*, in the art of sealing and folding a letter and in needlework, in which she was famous for her satin stitch, but she was fond of music and painting also.

Her career as a writer came second to her career as a daughter. Her writing was all done under difficulties, as, her desk being in the sitting-room, if anyone entered, she hastily closed it, not from any desire to conceal, but because of her great reserve and shyness. In the midst of her work by the fireside, she would sometimes burst out laughing, rush to her desk, write down something, and quietly come back to her place. She could not do what Scott called the "big bow-wow" style, but her touch was fine and delicate, and many biographical notes may be gleaned from any of her six novels.

It has been said that she must have been a feminist, as her ideas of women's work were so great and men were spoken highly of, not because they were men, but solely on their own merits.

We were reminded of the tablet placed to her memory in the beautiful cathedral near by, and the happy evening came to an end. Its memories still linger, and those older ones of Scale How were revived when we saw the platform, made to look like a drawing-room, with easy chairs and flowers about, and so many familiar faces, and we even seemed to see Miss Mason herself in the beautiful portrait which Miss Kitching had put up.

ELEANOR SMITH.

(Miss Chaplin's paper will appear in the *Parents' Review*.)

REPORT OF TALES TO CLASS I. A. BY MISS ALLEN.

Miss Allen said she was going to tell the children a true story about an Emperor who had a British mother, and who came to Britain when he was a little boy. The Emperor's name is Constantine, and his date 270 A.D.

Constantine's father died when he was 15 years old, and he did not at all like the idea of being Emperor. He was the captain of his army, and his soldiers were very fond of him. Generals and colonels begged him to be Emperor, so at last he consented on condition that he should not be called Augustus, which was the highest title, but he said "I will be Cæsar." So he was called Constantine Cæsar.

After a few years Constantine woke one morning to find rough places on his face, ugly looking sore places under his eyes and on his chin. Doctors were sent for, and it was leprosy. He could not hide it, he could not go out leading his people in processions, so the poor Emperor had to stay in his room all the time. Everybody was very sorry; several doctors gave him medicine and magicians worked spells, but he never got any better.

One day a man came from Persia, a very old man with a long beard, who wore a curious dress with a pointed cap. He said: "I know a cure for the Emperor." The Emperor was so tired of trying new cures, so he refused to see the old man, but sent him to the Council. He went to the hall and said that the Emperor was suffering from an unnatural disease, so he must have an unnatural cure. He said it was an old but certain cure. They must make a huge bath and put in it the blood of as many children under 7 years old as possible. The Emperor was to get in and the blood would cure him.

The Councillors went and told him, but he said he could not do it; but at last they persuaded him. So a messenger was sent that mothers were to bring their children. All were

dreadfully sorry, because it was not noble to die thus. They were all brought to the Emperor's courtyard, so that the place was filled with children and mothers, all round a large silver bath.

The Emperor heard the noise and crept through to a room where he could see and not be seen, and he saw the grief of the mothers who were about to lose their little children.

Constantine then sent for the Chamberlain and the Prime Minister, and said: "Write an order to send the children home; they were all made by the same God as I was, and I will not let them die for me." And they said: "Oh, but you will die, and you are the King." And he said: "It is better that one should die rather than a thousand; send them all home."

The Emperor's rule was absolute, so the Councillor said: "Silence! All the children are to go home."

The mothers and children were all very pleased indeed. That night the Emperor had a very curious dream. He was trying to sleep when two men appeared and said: "Because you have shown pity, the Lord will have pity on you. Send into Palestine, to Bishop Sylvester, who will heal you, body and soul. Tell him that the Apostles Peter and Paul gave you that message." Constantine sent messengers to Palestine, and they found Bishop Sylvester living as a hermit in a forest. They told him to come to the Emperor Constantine. The Bishop was frightened, and knowing that the Emperor worshipped the Roman gods, thought perhaps he was going to be beheaded. Still, he started on a camel across Palestine, then on a horse, then was carried in a sort of hammock until he reached the Emperor's palace at Rome. Then he was taken up steps and down corridors to the Emperor, who told him all the story of his dream. The Apostles had told him that he must be healed in soul and body. Now his soul had never attempted to understand the story of Christ. He had worshipped Jupiter, Zeus, Mars, and other Roman gods. Sylvester said: "Fill the silver bath

with water and come with me and I will baptise you into the faith of Jesus Christ." "Who is He?" asked Constantine. "He is our Saviour, Who died for our sins, and Whose blood has been shed for us. Fill the bath with clean pure water."

Constantine then came from his sheltered bedroom, all bandaged and sore, and had to make the effort himself of walking between people who stared at him, and unclothe himself and get into the bath.

Bishop Sylvester performed the service, and said a lot of prayers; then gradually the bad places fell off, until, at the end of the service, he was quite cured, and said: "I believe in Jesus Christ." So everybody was very glad, and told everybody else.

Miss Allen then showed pictures of the wailing children and the Bishop by the silver bath. Also a ring, on which was the cross of Constantine. She then added that Constantine left the unhealthy place where he had lived and built the new city of Constantinople.

FANCY DRESS PARTY.

The bright sunshine of Wednesday was particularly welcome after Tuesday's rain, and there was a delightful feeling in the air all the morning, as if something was going to happen. And something was to happen, for the most important event of the whole of the Winchester Gathering was to take place that afternoon. It was quite a gala day for the old city of Winchester itself as well as for those who were there for the Gathering—and as soon as one entered the High Street one was conscious that something unusual was toward. The pavements were thronged with sightseers, and the roadway was filled with people, both great and small, in the quaint garb of other days. The afternoon was so brilliantly fine that scarcely any wore cloaks, and the constant stream of carriages and of people on foot, wending its way to the Guildhall, was most picturesque. Arrived there, the first part of the

afternoon was devoted to tea. All those in fancy dress—which means all the children and quite a number of grown-ups as well—had a “sit down” tea in the Banqueting Hall—“in sooth, a goodly company”—and though the fare provided must have seemed strange to the greater number of those gathered there, all appeared to be having a good time. Meantime, those clad only in modern day dress found tea awaiting them on the platform in the large hall, and soon the galleries and chairs placed round the walls were full of an expectant crowd. All had been most splendidly arranged by Mrs. and Miss Clement Parsons, and each group was marshalled in the corridor and then went down the front steps of the Guildhall and in at the side entrance, to the edification of the inhabitants assembled outside. There each group was photographed and then passed up an outside staircase, across the platform, and so down into the hall to take up its allotted position. Soon the floor of the hall presented an animated appearance—a veritable feast of colour—and the Pageant began. Each section in turn took its place on the platform and was introduced by Mrs. Clement Parsons. Each gave place to the next until the whole range of Winchester history, from Arthur and his Knights down to the time of Jane Austen and the early Victorian days, had been passed in review. It was indeed a wonderful succession of great men and women, and one could only be amazed at the result of the many weeks and months of loving thought that had called them all into being.

The earliest group of all (of course) was that of King Arthur and his Knights, with Queen Guinivere, Elaine, Lynette, and others, made so familiar through the pages of Malory and of Tennyson's “*Idylls of the King*.”

Next came the Alfred group, and here we seemed to be living real history. There was Alfred with his Queen, Elswitha, his mother, and his sons and daughters, and many others, including Swithun, Alfred's tutor, after to be known as St. Swithun, the first great Bishop of Winchester. Next,

the 200 years of England under foreign sovereigns was passed in review. First came Cnut the Dane, who brought peace to England; Godwin and Edward the Confessor. Queen Emma, the Confessor's mother, was also there, and was of special interest as having really lived in God Begot House—such a conspicuous feature in the High Street of to-day. Next came William the Conqueror and his Norman knights (some of the small ones looking a little stiff about the knee and finding some difficulty in managing their swords), Queen Matilda and her ladies, and William Rufus, who was buried under the great tower of the Cathedral. These were followed by Henry I. and Matilda of Scotland. Their son, Prince William, who was lost in the White Ship, was born in Winchester Castle, and good Prior Godfrey was also there.

An interesting couple were the Earl and Countess of Winchester in the time of King John, impersonated by two little De Quinceys, who were actually descended from those they represented, and were accorded a special clap.

The fourteenth century group was in some respects the most interesting of all, for it included Winchester's great benefactor, William of Wykeham. There he was to all intents and purposes before us in the flesh, though on a somewhat minute scale, attended by his chaplain carrying his crozier—certainly one of the most fascinating figures in the whole company. Edward III. was accompanied by his Queen, Philippa, by the Black Prince, and the “Fair Maid of Kent”; and here, for the first time, the Yeomen of England figured as an important asset in the history of the age. Another picturesque figure was Margaret Beaufort, attired in a beautiful black velvet gown with jewelled girdle copied from the oldest authentic portrait in the National Gallery. With her were Henry VI. and his son Edward, and Bishop Waynfleet, also most closely linked with the history of the cathedral.

Coming to that age of splendour, the time of the Tudors, we saw Henry VII. and Bluff King Henry himself with

Katherine of Arragon as his Consort, and with Anne Boleyn as her maid of honour. Anne Boleyn was a delightful figure in a handsome dress of green and gold, and when recognised as Miss Clement Parsons, she was accorded a most rousing welcome. Mrs. Clement Parsons here pointed out that the time had passed when men carried their lives in their hands and were ready at all times to defend themselves at the point of the sword; life and property were respected, and so it came about that men no longer carried weapons of defence as a necessary part of their outfit, and the result was that dress became gradually more and more ornamental rather than useful; and when the Tudors were on the throne it had reached the height of its splendour. Another result of lawful living was that there was no longer need of sanctuary, and so the monasteries disappeared, and with them the monks and nuns, who figured so largely in some of the earlier groups. Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth were all in this group as being in some measure associated with Winchester; while Sir Walter Raleigh was actually sentenced to death in the Great Hall of the Castle. Philip of Spain, too, was there, for he and Queen Mary were married in the Cathedral, and we can to-day see the chair that Mary used on that occasion.

Passing on to the days of the Stuarts, Oliver Cromwell demanded the submission of the Castle, and so figured in the group. Charles II. was there with Mistress Jane Lane, who helped him to escape after the battle of Winchester; also Bishop Ken and Isaac Walton. Queen Anne, too, was there, attended by two pages, one of whom had really acted as page at the Coronation of George V.

The next group was of quite a different character. Mrs. Elizabeth Montague, Queen of the Blue Stockings, was attended by ploughmen, shepherds and shepherdesses, and other country folk, whom she used to feast in her park. Later in the afternoon these lads and lasses danced several country dances, which were much enjoyed by the onlookers.

Then came a charming group—Jane Austen driving a team

of her own characters, Emma Woodhouse, Elizabeth Bennett, Fanny Price, Miss Bates, Anne Eliot, and many other well-known friends.

Last of all came little Princess Victoria at the age of 4 (an exact reproduction of the well-known portrait), accompanied by the Duchess of Kent and a lady-in-waiting, and some well-known characters in Winchester in mid-Victorian days, the second Countess of Northesk (represented by her granddaughter), Bishop Wilberforce, Charlotte Yonge, Mrs. Yonge, and others.

So the whole history of Winchester was passed in review, and very hearty cheers were given for Mr. and Mrs. Clement Parsons and for Miss Parsons as a very slight appreciation of all their splendid work in connection with the Pageant.

The remainder of the afternoon was devoted to dancing, and it was a pretty sight to see all the various costumes mingling together and making merry over the lancers and other dances. Even the gallant knights tried to forget their stiff knees, and joined bravely in the merry-making. And so the great day came to an end, and the old High Street was again the witness of the picturesquely clad folk, who were this time wending their way homewards. It was, indeed, a huge success, and will live long in the memory of those fortunate enough to be there.

It might interest students who were not present to know what characters were represented by those students who took part. A complete list of all the characters would take up far too much space. If any student happens to be left out, I hope she will forgive the omission.

C. Cooper.	}	Black Nuns.
M. E. Owen.		
F. Judd.		

W. Kitching.	} Nuns of the Order of St. Joseph.
C. L. Neligan.	
H. E. Wix.	
K. Loveday.	
J. R. Smith.	} Franciscan Nuns.
E. L. Crowe.	
B. Goode.	} Nuns of the Faithful Virgin.
J. M. Wilkinson.	
J. D. Taylor.	

Misses Bigger—Shepherdesses.

Miss Gibson	Bishop Waynflete
J. H. Smith	Henry VII.
W. Tibbits	Bishop Gardiner
E. M. Brookes	Lady Southwell
D. Viney	Maid of Honour to Queen Anne
R. A. Pennethorne	Mrs. Bennett
E. M. Davis ...	Lady in Waiting to Princess Victoria
H. Smeeton	Mrs. Yonge
E. C. Smith	Miss Tina Crocket

L. GRAY.

VISIT TO ST. CROSS.

I was one of the fortunate people who went twice to St. Cross, once as a private individual and once with some responsibility due to the presence of some hundred children and parents who had come with the Winchester Gathering. The first time we walked there across the meads, incidentally also across bogs and through pools, but with such a destination and such perfect surroundings, of what consequence are wet feet?

The Hospital of St. Cross lies back from the river, among trees and away from the high road. One catches sight first of its low, square tower, then of the long lines of the warm, red-tiled roofs, then of peeps of grey, moss-clad walls. A little detour, and we are arrived. When the children went they were set down by the brakes outside the old gate house,

which now stands always open. One looks through the low, dark, cool arch to the stretch of well-kept lawn, and the beautiful Norman door of the church, which seems to invite the wanderer to enter and partake of its gentle hospitality.

For "Hospital" here has the mediæval sense, the "Place of Hospitality." It was founded in the twelfth century, 1136 A.D., to provide homes for twelve poor men and their wives, who should spend their lives "in peace and prayer." Later, under Cardinal Beaufort, it was enlarged, and further endowment was given that one hundred men should dine every day (vagrants). But Cardinal Beaufort was a scholar, and recognised that the poverty of the gently born was often grievous, even in those days; so that he further arranged for twenty old men of good education and family to live there with their wives. These latter brethren are distinguished as "Cardinal's men," and wear a red coat with a silver badge of a cardinal's hat. They are particular to remind the visitors of their standing, and one explained to me his position, pointing out the black-gowned brethren, and explained that originally his gown was scarlet, cardinal's colour, to protect the brethren from wild cattle in the meads, but now it is a dull Indian red, almost brown. All the brethren are under the care and direction of a master, and there is an unbroken record of the masters since the foundation. In fact, the Hospital of St. Cross is the only institution of mediæval times that has fulfilled unbroken the purpose of its founder.

To the right of the gate house there is the Cardinal's Hall, a beautiful building that takes us straight back to the Middle Ages. In the very centre of the room is the hearth, of red brick, and square, with an iron ring to keep the cinders, or ashes, in place. Across one end is the musicians' gallery, with some beautiful panelling; opposite is the low dais on which sat the master. There is now a wonderful table on the dais, of unknowable age, bearing the salt-cellar, drinking horn, and beer jug. The brethren sat at long tables down the side of the hall, but it is not used for meals now, as the